

VZCZCXRO1709  
PP RUEHPB  
DE RUEHPB #0162 1030130  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P R 130130Z APR 06  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4408  
INFO RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0768  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0171  
RHMFIS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 1774

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 000162

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

FOR EAP/ANP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 4/13/2016

TAGS: PGOV PREL BP

SUBJECT: SOLOMON ISLANDS/GUATEMALA/CHINA

REF: PORT MORESBY 154

CLASSIFIED BY: Robert Fitts, Ambassador, AMB, STATE.

REASON: 1.4 (d)

1.(SBU) Many-sided negotiations over the next Solomon Islands government are ongoing. It now looks like a reconfigured version of the former coalition, but with a weaker prime minister, may come out on top.

2.(C) Laurie Chan, the former Foreign Minister told Ambassador that he was now set to repeat that role in the next government (assuming the coalition wins) and pledged they would support Guatemala for the UNSC seat. Chan was confident of the outcome, but indicated that Snyder Rini, might become PM. Rini, known for sometimes feckless behavior, had been DPM and Minister of education.

3.(C) One worrying note: Chan indicated that PRC business interests (apparently logging companies) were providing funding to groups that would unite around Charles Dausebea as PM. Their obvious intent would be to overturn the previous coalition's long-term support for Taiwan (which in turn has long funded its candidates.) However, Dausebea has made little secret of his desire to oust RAMSI, the Australian-led assistance mission which has restored order to Solomon Islands and is now working to restore governance.

¶4. COMMENT: (C) Touching wood, we rate Dausebea's chances as low. However, this is another instance of Chinese activity in the South Pacific plays to local weakness and tends to undermine the work of more responsible partners. A vote to determine the next government in Solomon Islands is tentatively set for April ¶18.

FITTS